

Deadly Honor, Righteous Prize

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Summary: Prior to the destruction of the first Halo, a force is sent to eradicate the Flood. During the fight, their leader reflects upon his beliefs... and begins to doubt them... Oneshot

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****A/N: A oneshot looking into a Covenant's mind, prior to the destruction of the first Halo.****

Field Master Krata 'Kralazee inspected his plasma rifle. His eyes, normally filled with grim determination, held no emotion. Near him, a regiment of Unggoy were ready to fight. But the normally noisy beasts were silent. They didn't even make as much as a squeak. For this was their last stand.

Day after day, they were meant to hold back the filthy Parasite, to eradicate them. But for all of their efforts, they still came. Screeching, gibbering, they came, regardless of their best efforts.

Day after day, their brothers in arms, their brethren, fell and added to their enemy's numbers. The remaining, Kig-yar, Sangheili, Unggoy, Lekgolo, all of them, were now truly brothers. Brothers forged in combat, by the fiery hammer of war.

Day after day, he had requested additional forces, only to be snubbed by the Prophets. They had claimed that they were tasked by the Gods themselves to retrieve the Sacred Icon. Their arguments ended bitterly.

But not today. Today, the Parasite were massing. They were gathering, in large quantities, to destroy. Soon, they would come, like a plague across the land. And there was nothing that he, the leader of this futile resistance, could do. The gates of Death would not welcome

them. The only thing awaiting them wasâ€| despair.

Death would disavow himself of them, when he saw them. Infected by the unholy Parasite, they could not be accepted into the Divine Beyond. They would only exist. Existing as a half-life.

Not even life. The Parasite would control them, twist their bodies beyond repair, bring about a rain of despair. Truly, what was better, a half-life or death?

Death, he had decided. He had personally seen what the Parasite could do. Even if he could have freed himself of the Parasite, which he had considered unlikely, he would be a stain. A stain upon the purity of the Covenant. He would be scorned, hated, forgotten as the Great Journey begins.

But truly, what is death? Death is the eradication of one. Death is when one loses all consciousness. Death is what he deals every day. Death is inevitable.

Unless you were infected. Then, you experience Death personally, everyday. Then, the horror of reanimation, the reawakening, as another foul beast claims your body for its own.

True Death is infinitely preferable to _that._ At that very moment, Krata had made a solemn vow. Today, they were doomed. So, he vowed to make sure that _none_ of them would be infected. Even if he had to ravage their own corpses, if need be.

Krata's second-in-command, Bora 'Brakalee, a Sangheili Major, walked up to him, snapping him out of his reverie. "Excellency, the Parasite is charging. We must fight."

Krata did not respond for five full seconds. "Very well. But, I must ask you. Have you ever consideredâ€| Death? That we may not survive this day?"

Bora questioned, "What? No, under your command, we shall beat back the Parasite, and claim our righteous prize!"

"Very well, then." Krata relented, as he prepared himself for combat.

He readied his plasma rifle, then thought better of it. Why go out with a whimper, when you can go out with a bang? He withdrew his energy sword, and took his place in front of the ranks. Five Wraith tanks flanked him, along with a hundred Ghosts. They were ready to fire at the twitch of a finger. Their reaction times were honed so sharply by their skirmishes.

The Parasite charged. Rockets and human bullets flew. Krata barked a single command, and the Wraiths belched plasma mortars in response. The Ghosts scattered, and singled out individual targets. Krata began running, to meet the Flooding opposition. His forces followed.

How long has it been? Krata knew not. He only knew that he had been fighting for so long, and his arms were numb. He could only keep

swinging his energy sword through knowledge that his troops depended on him. He wearily slashed, and another combat form fell. He heard shrieking noises behind him, and turned.

Five of his kind were being slaughtered by countless Parasite. He ran towards them, and sent the opposing forces to hell with several plasma grenades. But too late. The last of them has fallen. He looked around. No hostiles yet. He bent down, to form the mark of reverence on his fallen brothers. He took out a small knife, and made two slashes in their chests. One for honor, one for faith.

As he stood up, he noticed that the land was brighter than before. He looked away, and saw a second sun. But this one was much closer to the surface.

"The Great Journey" Krata whispered. "Has finally begun."

The blindingly pure light was too great for him to behold. He openly wept at the sight. For it meant many things to him.

Their sacrifices were not in vain.

The Parasite shall finally be forgotten.

The loss of his brethren.

Glorious Salvation.

But it gave him another chance to think. Would he tread on this Holy path?

Never.

For the bones of his brothers adorned the sides of it.

Their blood painted it.

It was raised by the tears and flesh of countless members of the Covenant.

The Prophets they had used them. Twisted them for their own purposes.

And if he were to walk the Holy path, then that meant he accepted all of this vile treachery.

If he walked on the road to salvation, he would be casting aside their sacrifices.

If he allowed any of his command to accept this, then that meant he was pathetic. A bigger stain than the Prophets.

But no matter. The white light was nearly upon them. He would give himself to this, for the only alternative was the Flood or treachery.

Krata smiled, as he stared at the light. Then, he recited an old battle hymn.

The Covenant!

One indomitable might, we allâ€|

The purifiers of the Universe, we allâ€|

Many people, many minds, but one purposeâ€|

Glorious Salvation!

_Forged in the smithy of war, pounded by the hammer of Discipline,
bound by the reagent of Brotherhood!_

The Covenant!

_Deadly might, righteous heart, to eradicate the defilers, we
allâ€|_

To enforce the will of the Forerunners, we allâ€|

The arms of the Gods, we allâ€|

Many people, many minds, but one purposeâ€|

Glorious Salvation!

_Forged in the smithy of war, pounded by the hammer of Discipline,
bound by the reagent of Brotherhood!_

The Covenant!

Krata finished it. He spread out his arms, to embrace his fate.

He never felt death. The cleansing fire justâ€| engulfed him. It was
as good a fate anyone could have asked for. For the first time in so
long, he wasâ€| happy.

Happy that none of his troops would have to live as the
reincarnated.

Happy that he had done his duty to the extent of his
abilities.

Happy that he had proven that he was stronger than this.

****Author Note: Soâ€| yeah. Like it? Hate it so much that you want to
shoot it? Review anyways.****

****The song is mine, by the way. ****

End
file.